



City of Missoula
Police Department
Press Release

For immediate release

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Police Emphasize Pedestrian Crossing Safety

The Missoula Police Department will conduct Pedestrian Crossing Emphasis Patrols beginning this week in an effort to enforce pedestrian crossing laws within the city limits. The emphasis will be in the downtown business area and high foot-traffic areas to reduce pedestrian- versus-vehicle crashes. An important point of this enforcement will also be to educate drivers and pedestrians about crossing laws and their respective responsibilities. With that in mind, enforcement of either the laws related to yielding or crossing will be part of this enforcement action.

This is also a good time to remind pedestrians that they cannot begin to cross the street when the pedestrian control head is either solid red or flashing red with the accompanying countdown. The countdown is intended to let pedestrians who are already crossing know how much time they have left to cross the street safely, not how much time pedestrians have to begin crossing. This is an important safety issue as the cross streets at many intersections turn green very quickly after the countdown ends, stranding the pedestrian in the middle of the road when traffic has the green light.

The goal of this action will be to increase the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists and motor vehicle operators. We hope these enforcement efforts will remind *everyone* that they are not alone on Missoula's roadways. The streets of Missoula are heavily used by many forms of transportation, including motor vehicles, bicycles, pedestrians and wheelchairs, and all travelers need to be aware of their surroundings as well as others who share the road.

Police officers will use both education and enforcement action where appropriate. This effort will continue through the summer and fall, when pedestrian traffic increases throughout Missoula as college students return and public schools begin classes.

Any questions regarding pedestrian laws and responsibilities can be directed to the Missoula Police Department Traffic Office at 552-6333. The Pedestrians regulations are in Chapter 10.44 of the Missoula Municipal Code, available on the City website at http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1031#Chapter_10_44

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